

Appln. No.: 10/663,157
Amendment Dated January 6, 2005
Reply to Office Action of September 27, 2004

GH-50017-2

Remarks/Arguments:

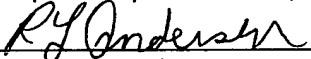
In the preliminary amendment filed with the application on September 15, 2003, claims 1-20 were canceled, and claims 21-37 were added. The Office Action dated September 27, 2004 considers only claims 1-9 and 20. As claims 1-20 were canceled in the preliminary amendment, the rejections of these claims are moot.

In a telephone conversation between Examiner Wegert and the applicants' representative, Pamela D. Politis, on October 28, 2004 the confusion surrounding the examination of canceled claims was discussed. Examiner Wegert explained that a replacement action would be mailed out in which the prior Office Action would be withdrawn and pending claims 21-37 would be considered. Applicants have not yet received a replacement action, and as of December 29, 2004, the USPTO PAIR website indicates that there has been no activity since the mailing of the September 27, 2004 Office Action. Applicants request the withdrawal of the September 27, 2004 Office Action and mailing of the replacement Office Action at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

In the event the Examiner, upon consideration of this paper elects not to withdraw or replace the prior Office Action, applicants hereby request a one month extension of time and authorizes the director to charge the required extension fee to the deposit account as indicated below.

If it would expedite prosecution, the Examiner is invited to confer with the undersigned representatives at the telephone numbers set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

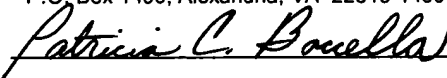

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Dated: January 6, 2005

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The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge payment to Deposit Account No. 18-0350 of any fees associated with this communication.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on: January 6, 2005


Patricia C. Boccella

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